

Dr. Martin Karp, Vice Chair

**SUBJECT: TEXTBOOKS AND TECHNOLOGY**

**COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION, & TECHNOLOGY**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: SAFE, HEALTHY, AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Although Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) strive to be in the forefront of academic innovation, these efforts should not come at the expense of our students' health and well-being. M-DCPS recognizes technology could be educational, environmentally friendly, and financially beneficial, but M-DCPS also has to determine where the line needs to be drawn on the hours students are required to use technology for classwork and homework.

In the past decade, strict guidelines were proposed by the American Academy of Pediatrics for screen time limits—no screen time for children under 2 years of age and only 1-2 hours a day of total screen time for 3 to 18 year olds. Recently, the guidelines have been removed, and now they give the advice that families should set their own parameters. Today's parents would have a difficult job setting parameters when much of a student's work needs to be performed online. M-DCPS should consider how much time the average student needs to be plugged in just to complete their school work, and then generate some guidelines to ensure a balanced textbook and technology approach.

Some reasons why M-DCPS should use a hybrid model is that studies are showing that reading comprehension is greater when using traditional textbooks as opposed to reading on monitors. Overuse of Wi-Fi and screen time has been linked to obesity, poor posture, shorter attention spans, social isolation, reduced comprehension, and visual impairment.

Also, a very common complaint among parents is the battle to pry their children away from electronic devices. Once on the device, it is difficult to monitor if there are split screens open, and if homework is being done, and what a child is viewing on the screen. Incorporating a hybrid delivery model using traditional materials and technology will allow less emphasis on one delivery method and reduce some of the aforementioned concerns.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney's office as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
DR. MARTIN KARP:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to:

1. Generate guidelines for allowable screen time recommendations factoring in classwork and homework;
2. Ensure a balanced textbook and technology approach; and
3. Provide a response before the March 2019 School Board meeting.